

From: Bushong, Linda (MDE) **On Behalf Of** Leikert, Howard J (MDE)
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Subject: Tuesday News from MDE 090611

"Welcome Back"!!! Ah, the phrase reminds me of the old TV show theme song from "Welcome Back, Kotter" starring Gabe Kaplan and John Travolta. If you are old enough to remember the show, join me in remembering those days and if you are too young to remember, listen to this not so bad theme song from yesteryear - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVS3Wnt7yRU> .

Back to work – I do welcome you back for another school year. It should be a very interesting year leading us into a school year (2012-2013) that promises to be like no other in over 30 years. This school year should be full of challenges and rewards. I am looking forward to it!

- 1) Change is coming - We are truly in the midst of major changes in how school lunch does business. When I started in the business in 1978, the key was to give kids what they wanted. Drive participation. Feed as many students as you can. Bring in as much money as legally and ethically possible. Of course, you still had to follow the meal pattern but there was much latitude. Now, the focus is to give the kids what is healthy. That, while not a COMPLETE change is still a significant one. I've always said that school food service TRAILS society. We didn't start the large order of fries but after McDonalds and all started to, and our customers starting expecting them, we made them available too. Pop was around and being marketed way before it was brought into any school or cafeteria. It was brought into schools backed by big contracts with school districts and sometimes the pop worked with the food service department and sometimes against. But I digress. The change to a healthier meal pattern, a tightening of control on competitive foods, and overall more emphasis on healthy school campuses is a good change. It is our turn to LEAD and not trail society. Offer and serve the most nutritious meals we can. Ideally, we can get our students to enjoy sweet potatoes, spinach salads and legumes so they ask for them at home. Maybe, just maybe, we can get restaurants and fast food places to TRAIL us. Will this be easy? No. Will it happen overnight? No. Do we have to make our best try? Yes.
- 2) What You Must Have Done – The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act was signed into law in December of 2010. Parts of it were meant to be implemented immediately, some phased in over time. Following are the parts you must have done prior to or put in place for the 2011-2012 school year:
 - a. Paid price equity – if your average lunch price was between \$1.60 and \$2.46, you were required to raise prices or find non-federal sources to make up the difference of not raising your price.
 - b. Nonprogram foods – the United States Department of Agriculture wants to make sure any nonprogram foods sold (a la carte, catering, etc.) bring in a proportionate amount of revenue (to the cost) as the school meal programs do.
 - c. Outreach - Your district needed to provide outreach on any summer school food service program operating in your community, prior to the end of last school year. At the beginning of this school year, your district must have told the community about the availability of breakfast at your participating schools.

- d. The One Meal Pattern Change for this Year - Milk this year must be a variety of any 1% or skim milk, flavored or unflavored – no 2% percent or whole milk to be served at all.
 - e. Water Requirement – you must make water available to all students WITHOUT RESTRICTION. It can be a water fountain in or near the serving/cafeteria area, pitchers of water with cups, faucet with cups, 5 gallon jugs of water with cups or any method that will provide water to students without restriction.
 - f. Foster Children – are now categorically eligible for free meals without further application. They are now included in our direct certification list as well.
 - g. Social Security Numbers – on free and reduced applications, only the last 4 digits are required.
 - h. Local Wellness Policy – districts need to work on improving the content and enforcement of a Local Wellness Policy.
 - i. School Food Safety – food must be served properly no matter where on campus it may be served. Correct food safety and handling procedures are to be followed whether it is in the cafeteria, breakfast in the classroom, or the parents booster club serving food in the gym.
- 3) What I Hope You Have Done – Not to be preachy, but I hope at least some of you took my advice and worked on such things as a budget, marketing plan, new menu ideas, and any other thing that will help either your program or yourself to be the best it can.
- 4) Make Sure You Stay in the Know – I occasionally get questioned why people don't receive my weekly emails or other communications from this office. While we can manually add names to our list, it is best for a whole variety of reasons to update your information. For example, when we send out notifications for the National School Lunch Program, we pull the email addresses from the Michigan Electronic Grants System Plus (MEGS+). Any changes made to email addresses will have to be done by your school/organization through 2012 MEGS+ CNP: School Nutrition Programs, which can be found at the following link: <https://mdoe.state.mi.us/megsplus/>. This is done by amending #8 Contact Person or #12 Food Service Director on the Sponsor Information page in 2012 MEGS+ CNP: School Nutrition Programs. If you have any questions, contact our department at 517-373-3347. Thank you.

Hey, that's enough for the first week. I know you are all busy feeding kids this week so I will let you have at it. I'll be back next week. 'til then!!!

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